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ABSTRACT

An adult education bill submitted to the Swedish parliament contained the following proposals; an increase in the grant to study preferential circles at the comprehensive school level; continued active recruitment to adult education by the FOVUX Committee; increasing the availability of education for shift-workers; and a grant of 200,000 kronor for the production of educational materials for the handicapped. The bill also provided for increased special educational counseling and occupational guidance services for adult students, and for additional research and development in the field of adult education. These will be financed by a proposed additional allocation of 86 million kronor for adult education. (RS)

SWEDISH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION March 13, 1972

Press communiqué

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ED 068740

Adult Education Bill

Mr Sven Moberg, Minister without Portfolio, today submitted to parliament a bill on adult education. It contains the following proposals.

. The grant to study circles at comprehensive school level in the subjects Swedish, English, Mathematics and Civics - so-called preferential circles - should be raised from 40 to 45 kronor to enable the educational associations to intensify their outreach activities.

. The active recruitment to adult education that the government FÖVUX Committee [1] is carrying on at places of work should continue during the budget year 1972/73.

Education for shift-workers should be facilitated by lowering the minimum number required for holding of a course at some places with large number of shift-workers.

. A special grant of 200,000 kronor should be made for the production of educational material for the handicapped.

. Special educational and occupational guidance services for adult students should be established within local government adult education. Increased resources should be made available for research and development within the field of adult education. Representatives of adult education should be appointed to the Educational Research and Development Committee of the National Board of Education.

. The allocations to adult education should be increased by 86 million kronor, amounting to 523.3 million kronor in the budget year 1972/73.

Adult education has now reached extensive proportions. The number of members of study circles in the budget year 1970/71 was about 1.6 million. Some 170,000 persons attended local and national government adult education courses in the same year. There were about 30,000 students on folk high school courses. More than 100,000 persons

1) Committee on Methods Testing in Adult Education, appointed in Jan. 1970

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received labour market training, nearly, 11,000 took courses arranged by the employees' organizations. The total number of participants in publicly supported adult education was thus nearly 2 million.

The main aim in the adult education reforms of recent years has been to enable persons with short and inadequate education to raise their educational level. As popular education has proved to be an excellent means of access to these groups, priority has been given to this form of education.

Increase of incremental grant

In 1970 a special incremental grant of 10 kronor per study period was introduced for study circles at comprehensive school level in the subjects Swedish, English, Mathematics and Civics. These so-called preferential study circles are a very important instrument for groups which have been disfavoured in respect of education. It is therefore proposed in the bill that a special grant of 5 kronor per study period be made to the preferential study circles for administration and active recruitment work.

Grant for production of teaching aids for the handicapped

To reduce course fees for handicapped members of study circles in need of special teaching aids, and to stimulate the production of such teaching aids, a special grant of 200,000 kronor is proposed for the production of educational materials for the handicapped. This porposal comes in response to a petition from The Society for the Blind.

FÖVUX to continue for another year

The bill contains an account of the outreach activities conducted by FÖVUX. Mr Moberg considers that theexperience gained from the work of FÖVUX shows that the trial period should be prolonged in order to allow a more definite assessment of the educational situation of those with a short period of education, which is necessary for the institution of more systematic efforts. It is proposed therefore that funds be granted for continued trials during the budget year 1972/73.

Local government adult education

Local government adult education has expanded quickly in recent years. In the academic year 1967/68 there were local government evening couses at upper secondary level at some 30 places. Today local government adult education facilities

exist at some 320 places. According to the bill priority should be given during the year 1972/73, as during the present year, to comprehensive school courses. It is suggested that upper secondary school courses should be increased by 10 %, with special emphasis on the establishment of vocational courses. It is also important to attain a more even distribution within the country. Mr Moberg states that he counts, however, on a general increase in the number of hours of teaching in all local government areas. It is proposed in the bill that at most 40 % of the general allowance for tuition etc. within local government adult education should be used for full-time or part-time duties as educational and occupational consultant. The bill proposes also that it shall be compulsory for teachers in local government adult education to attend special adult education programmes on at least one day assigned for private studies.

Assistance for education of shift-workers

A change was made last year in the rules concerning the minimum number of students required for establishment of a course. Up to then a permanent number of twelve students had been required for all courses, which caused problems in sparsely populated areas. The present rule is that the number of students may be as low as eight at places within the general subsidy area with the exeption municipalities with an integrated upper secondary school. As, at many places with a large proportion of shift workers, it has proved difficult to assemble a sufficient number of students who are off work at the same time, it is suggested on trial that 100 courses with not less than eight students should be arranged at places where shift-work occurs on a major scale and which are sparsely populated localities or situated outside the general subsidy area.

Adult education research

The bill also deals with the proposals of the Commission on Educational Research and Development concerning research and development in adult education. Mr Moberg states in the bill that, like the Commission and the advisory bodies, he considers it extremely urgent that, within the scope of educational research and development within the school system, increased resources should be allotted to research and development within adult education. The amount of 2 million kronor proposed by the Commission should, in Mr Moberg's opinion, be a suitable target for these engagements in the next academic year.

The bill proposes, finally, that the number of members on the Educational Research and Development Committee of the Board of Education should be increased in order that the Committee may devote increased attention to questions of adult education.